

**City of
Fitchburg**



**Department of
Public Works**

February 16, 2022

COMMISSIONER

301 Broad Street
978-829-1910
978-345-9687 FAX

STREETS & PARKS

301 Broad Street
978-829-1900
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WASTEWATER

166 Boulder Drive, Suite 108
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SEWER COLLECTION

301 Broad Street
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WATER

1200 Rindge Road
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ENGINEERING

301 Broad Street
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978-345-9687 FAX

CEMETERIES

115 Mount Elam Road
978-345-9578
978-345-9686 FAX

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100
Mail code OES04-04
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3912
Attn: Beth Kudarauskas

Massachusetts D.E.P., CERO
8 New Bond Street
Worcester, MA 01606
Attn: David Boyer

Re: SSO and Dry-Weather CSO Compliance Report

Dear Messrs. Handler and Boyer:

In accordance with the City of Fitchburg's Consent Decree, Paragraph 71, this letter is to serve as the 2021 Compliance Report. In this report we are covering the period from February 1, 2021 to January 31, 2022. It includes a list of sanitary sewer overflows (SSO's) and dry-weather combined sewer overflows (CSO's). A map is provided displaying the locations of all events. A list is provided of private property sewer backups that sought City assistance. Finally, a brief explanation will be provided on how the City expects to meet its water quality-based CSO compliance obligations.

List of SSO's

The City experienced eight (8) sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) in the reporting period that were the result of issues with the municipally owned sewer system. All SSO's were reported to the MassDEP and EPA, and a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO)/Bypass Notification Form was submitted.

Table 1 (attached), and the attached map includes all SSOs. A brief description of each event is as follows:

- 1) **9 Harrison Avenue, 2/3/21** – The city was notified of a homeowner backing up in their basement. The City responded and jetted the line, removing rags and some minor roots. To reduce the risk of SSOs in this pipe segment, the City cleaned and CCTV'd the pipe. Approximately 3 gallons of sewerage discharged to the basement of the dwelling. This area has been added to the City's problem area check list.
- 2) **34 Ash Street, 2/11/21** – A sewer manhole in this area was discovered to have leaked about 15 gallons into the snow surrounding it. The City responded by vacuuming the manhole and jetting the line, removing roots. This area has been added to the City's problem area check list.

- 3) **147 Water Street, 2/18/21** - A sewer manhole was discovered to have overflowed about 4,500 gallons of sewage into a nearby catch basin. After jetting and CCTV of the line the City discovered the pipe to be collapsed. Two spot repairs were made including a cure-in-place liner. Upstream sewer flow was later routed away from this location as part of the CSO-039 project.
- 4) **8 George Street, 3/1/21** - The City responded to a call about sewerage backing up into a basement. Upon response, the City jetted the line and relieved a blockage. The blockage appears to have been caused by a sag in the pipe along with heavy rag build-up. Approximately 150 gallons were discharged to the basement of the residence. The City will be replacing the pipe segment to remove the sag, depending on left-over available funding from the on-going CSO-039 project.
- 5) **317 Kimball Street, 6/26/21** - The City responded to a call about sewerage overflowing from a catch basin. Upon response, the City jetted the line and relieved a blockage of roots. The area was then washed down with water from the vacuum truck and the catch basin was cleaned of sewerage and road grit. Approximately 5,000 gallons were discharged. Root killer will be added as a periodic maintenance task.
- 6) **569 Main Street, 7/19/21** - The City was called to reports of sewer backing up into the building basement. The backup was caused by a heavy rain event. This property has a history of backup issues during rain events. This will be corrected with the "downtown" separation project in a few years. Approximately 5,000 gallons are estimated to have spilled into the building basement.
- 7) **First Street at Railroad Street River Manhole, 7/19/21** - Shortly after a rain event the City noticed this manhole cover to be dislodged. Though an SSO was not witnessed we assumed one occurred due to ragging on the manhole steps and the dislodged cover. We will replace the existing "tabbed" locking frame cover with a more heavy-duty bolted frame and cover. Because an SSO wasn't witnessed no estimate of discharge could be made.
- 8) **605 Franklin Road, 7/22/21** - The City was called to investigate sewerage pooling on the ground along a sewer easement. The main line was jetted and a blockage was removed. Lye was spread on the ground in the affected area. Approximately 150 gallons are estimated to have puddled and infiltrated into the ground. Spot repairs were made on this line to reduce the chances of future SSOs.

List of Dry-Weather CSO Events

The City experienced no dry weather CSOs in the reporting period that were the result of issues with its municipally owned system.

List of Private Property Backups

The City uses "SeeClickFix" to monitor private property sewer backups. SeeClickFix is a web-based software which allows the City, or constituents to enter and track sewer issues. To date, the system has been well received by both residents and City personnel. Table 3 contains a list from the SeeClickFix system for private homeowner, or non-SSO related issues. Homeowners are responsible for calling a plumber to clear blockages or infrastructure failures within the privately owned sewer service, or within the building plumbing.

Qualifying statement to meet water quality obligations.

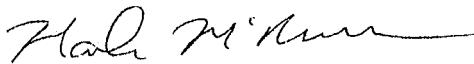
In the reporting year, the City neared completion of its Sewer System Evaluation Study, (SSES) Phase IV. Phase IV includes complete multi-sensor inspection of the City's trunk sewer. During the reporting year, the City also hired a contractor to clean five double barrels siphons in the City, 3 of which are on the trunk sewer near the WWTF. Additional heavy cleaning will was also conducted at specific locations of the trunk sewer and large diameter sewers throughout the City. The City also separated 22 combination manholes during the reporting year, and will be separating additional combination manholes in the coming year using a combination of in-house and outside forces.

Within the reporting period, the City began construction of the CSO-7, 11, 39, and 48 Sewer Separation project. In addition to closing four CSO regulators, the City expects to permanently separate approximately 17 combination manholes within this project. The project is started in November 2020, with work continuing throughout the winter months on combination manhole separation and pipe lining.

We will continue to make strong efforts in the next reporting period to improve water quality to the Nashua River.

If you have any questions regarding this compliance report, please contact Fitchburg Civil Engineer, Jeff Hillman, P.E., at 978-829-1916, or the undersigned.

Very Truly Yours,



Mark McNamara
Fitchburg DPW Interim Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater

Attachments

Electronic & Hard Copy: Beth Kudarauskas, USEPA, Region 1 Office
David Boyer, P.E., MassDEP, Central Region Office

Electronic copy:
(Transmittal letter only)

Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section, DOJ
Anu Balakrishna, Assistant U.S. Attorney
Jeff Kopf, Senior Enforcement Counsel, EPA Region 1
Louis Dundin, Assistant Attorney General, Massachusetts AG
Vincent Pusateri, II, Fitchburg City Solicitor

Electronic copy:

Nicholas Erickson, P.E., Fitchburg Commissioner of Public Works
Jeff Hillman, P.E., Fitchburg Civil engineer

"I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations."

Mark McNamara.
DPW Interim Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater

Table 1 - SSO Events (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

| Date | Address | Time | Time | Discovered | Stopped | (gal) | Location of Discharge | Receiving Waterbody | Volume to Receiving Waterbody (gal) | Specific Cause of Event | Blockage? | Hydraulic Limitations? | Measures Taken to Stop Event | Last Release from this Area |
|------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3/2/2020 | 133 Bell Air Drive | 1:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 3 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Jetted line three times and removed blockage. | N/A | |
| 3/11/2020 | 228 Plymouth Street | 3:10 PM | 3:30 PM | 30 | Sanitary sewer manhole | North Nashua River | 30 | | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Will add manhole to problem check list. Removed rags from pipe along with black water indicating blockage has been forming for quite some time. | N/A | |
| 4/4/2020 | 34 Gillis Court | 1:15 PM | 2:00 PM | 150 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Removed rags from pipe along with black grass. Also raised manhole for better access. | N/A | |
| 5/15/2020 | 28 Phillips Avenue | 11:00 AM | 12:00 PM | 20 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Jetted line and removed blockage of rags. | N/A | |
| 6/15/2020 | 43 Paxton Street | 3:31 PM | 3:30 PM | 25 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Pipe collapse | Yes | No | Jetted line removed blockage, conducted repair on damaged section of pipe. | N/A | |
| 10/28/2020 | 47 Arlington Street | 11:30 AM | 12:30 PM | 75 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Jetted line and removed blockage, full brick found in invert from corbel. Repaired manhole frame and cover. | N/A | |
| 11/19/2020 | 50 Lander Street | 11:50 AM | 12:30 PM | 6,000 | Backup out of ground | None | | 0 | Pipe collapse | Yes | No | Replaced 50 feet of pipe with new PVC. | N/A | |
| 11/19/2020 | 480 Ashburnham Street | 8:30 AM | 9:00 AM | 2,000 | Catch basin | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Jetted line and relieved blockage. | N/A | |
| 11/19/2021 | 17 Europa Street | 5:30 PM | 8:00 AM | 200 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Jetted line and relieved blockage. | N/A | |
| 11/15/2021 | 634 Ashby Side Road | 10:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 200 | Sanitary sewer manhole | None | | 0 | Pipe collapse | Yes | No | Repaired leaking firemain clean out. | N/A | |
| 12/28/2021 | 551 Electric Avenue | 4:30 PM | 5:00 PM | 2,000 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Jetted line relieved blockage and CECTd lines. | N/A | |
| 1/28/2022 | 500 Beach Street | 2:30 PM | 3:00 PM | 8,000 | Backup into property basement | None | | 0 | Sewer system blockage | Yes | No | Obstruction removed from main line. | N/A | |

Table 2 - Dry Weather CSO Events (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

| Date | Address | Nature of Call | Findings |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|---|
| 3/01/202 | 18 Matthew St | Smell like rotten eggs that keeps coming and going in backyard over last week. Already had Until come out and they said it wasn't a gas leak... thinking maybe sewer gas but no pipes in the backyard where the odor is so maybe from Hancock street? | Someone did come out to check. Not sure if they discovered the source or not (the odor was not present at the time they came to check). But perhaps they did find the source and fixed it because there hasn't been a recurrence of the odor since then. |
| 3/20/2020 | 152 South St | Sewage spill seeping from wall down side walk smells very bad, between 142 and 152 South St. cracked cover | Leaking Lateral. Homeowner issue. |
| 4/21/2020 | 64 Hope St | back up in basement toilets | Carl responded and replaced cracked cover. |
| 4/21/2021 | 100 Elm St | back up at house when running water | tony responded, opened up all manholes on Elm, Wallace, and Grove. Everything flowing as it should. A little bit of drain back up in drain line on grove, but looks like just standing water. |
| 5/1/2020 | 96 Bel Air Dr | manhole in back yard near end of driveway is surcharging | carl responded, main line flowing fine. Tony told homeowner that we would alert here if it was a city issue, but she should call a plumber. |
| 5/15/2020 | 52 Ward St | tub and toilet backing up | private MH in back yard serves 25 Central Ave, and we also determined via dye test and CCTV that 42 Central Ave ties in just downstream of the MH at a wye. We cleared the roots out of the MH, added root killer, and gave some root killer to the resident to keep the roots at bay |
| 5/21/2020 | 66 Railroad St | backing up, plumber TV'd line and found that lateral pipe had collapsed | ray jetted line with eddie, took out some rats and grease. Homeowner said it fixed the issue. She called back again on 5/18/20, said it backed up again. Carl and Eddie went over and jetted line twice. Said everything is flowing fine. Tony looked at old video, shows the lateral packed with roots. Advised homeowner and dropped off some root killer to her to see if that would help. |
| 6/3/2020 | 34 Berkley St | noticed driving to work every morning horrible odor coming from nash in the area by berlins rd right after intersection, actually made me wrench this morning, smells like raw sewage | tony told homeowner to file claim, but I said there is no guarantee he will be reimbursed. He believes it occurred because of paving/pulverizing in the area by PJ Albert. |
| 6/8/2020 | 55 Jeanette St | broken cover reported by until | Smell has dissipated. Likely came from trunk sewer off-gassing through covers. |
| 6/26/2020 | 41 Greenhurst Ave | pump alarm on e-one keeps going off | ray replaced cover |
| 6/26/2020 | 583 Ashburnham St | homeowner had his lateral cleaned, said something is in main line that might be cause of his back up. | tony and ken responded, found alarm panel going off in basement, told homeowner to call FR Mahoney for service on e-one. gravity manhole near intersection with wanocoop flowing fine. |
| 7/2/2020 | 460 Clarendon St | Unitil Gas damaged a lateral putting in a new gas line | bob and eddie responded, jetted line and said seems to be flowing better, but didn't see a "license plate" as the caller reported at the end of his lateral. Might have been a homeowner issue, or a city issue. hard to say. |
| 7/2/2020 | 5 Linden St | back up in basement when using laundry | tony responded, Unitil repaired broken lateral with 6" PVC, existing lateral is 5" clay. Appeared to still be active. One end they just mortared up the joint since that was how it was originally with concrete. Just poured around the bell. |
| 7/13/2020 | 348 Cathy St | snaked out 50-feet, backing up still | Bob and Kevin responded, said main line flowing fine. No one home to answer. Tony called her back and said she has to call a plumber. |
| 7/20/2020 | 172-174 Townsend Street | Rattling manhole cover at the beginning of Townsend Street (around #167) | ray and eddie responded. Jetted line, everything flowing fine. Appears that homeowner did not snake far enough to clear lateral. |
| 9/23/2020 | 275 Franklin Rd | backing up, roots in main line | Put butterfly around cover |
| 10/6/2020 | 46 Mt Globe St | sewerage coming out of wall in front of house, and from a clean out in front of front porch. Feces were witnessed | Tony talked to homeowner on 9/25 and checked main line, told him it could be roots in lateral. He thought until broke it, so until is coming by to CCTV. Unitil's trench was not on the right side of the road to impact his lateral. Likely roots. Owner said it's orangeburg pipe. |
| 10/5/2020 | 55 Central St | back up | Told Health Department that homeowner needs to clear lateral. |
| 11/3/2020 | 36 Ronald St | basement backup | Ray responded, main line flowing fine. Tony responded, found that an open clean out in basement was letting sewerage in. Also a drain channel around the basement floor that lead to the clean out, which likely carried groundwater, which is why it was worse when it rained. city sewer was flowing fine, told homeowner to call a plumber |

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

| Date | Address | Nature of Call | Findings |
|-------------|------------------------|---|--|
| 1/1/2020 | 510 Franklin Rd | snaled out 100 feet - still backing up, until dug in road in front of house | tony responded, main line flowing fine. Does not look like Until dug in location of lateral according to record plan. Called Until, they were going to visit home. Told homeowner they should snake line further as lateral is almost 120 feet long. |
| 1/1/2/2020 | 132 Appleton Cir | back up at house, running slow | Tony responded, sewer flowing fine, checked mh in backyard. told homeowner to snake out line |
| 1/2/2020 | 30 Rockland St | manhole cover missing | replaced manhole frame and cover |
| 1/2/2020 | 86 Harrison Ave | back up at house, snaked out, pipe seems collapse | Homeowner had contractor repair lateral |
| 1/27/2020 | 137 Appleton Cir | back up | Tony found old jet line in lateral. Told homeowner she likely has roots, need to clear it out |
| 1/21/2020 | 175 Marshall Rd | Sewer smells. We've been experiencing this on and off since we moved in 2018. We had a minor back up issue on Sat when it snowed. | Ray responded. Everything appears to be flowing fine. May come from Hollis Hills Farm |
| 1/21/2020 | 139 Parson Circle | back up, coming out of vent under porch | lateral ties into neighbor's lateral and didn't reinstate line from 139. Tandem construction dug lateral and re-instated it. |
| 1/1/2020 | 331-499 Nichols Rd | Back up in lateral | Home owner had a back up, and needed to know if they were responsible for the issue. |
| 1/4/2021 | 15 Brigham Street | back up in bathroom, both units of duplex | Home owner was notified that they were responsible and advised to call plumber. |
| 1/2/25/2020 | 29 Westminister Street | Sewer in basement | home states when using shower, it backs up. Adjoining unit also backing up. Checked upstream and downstream MHs, flowing fine. Homeowner issue, need to call plumber. |
| 1/2/27/2020 | 175 Walton Street | Water trickling in basement | Checked flow in street. Home owner issue |
| 1/2/27/2020 | 45 Pepper Road | water in basement | Basement flooded. |
| 1/2/27/2020 | 120 Marshall St | Building backing up | checked sewer main in street/ flowing fine. |
| 1/13/2020 | 65 Mount Vernon Street | back up | Talked to home owner, ground water coming in through open pipe. Homeowner has groundwater in basement. Looks like yard work in back may have covered perimeter drain and prevented it from draining. |
| 1/14/2020 | 158 Green St | Sewer coming out of sidewalk | Advised to have plumber snake the line and call back if back up continues. |
| 1/1/10/2020 | 33 Payson Street | sewer backup at house | Checked manholes - Home owner issue |
| 1/0/3/2020 | 61 Amiot Street | backup | Checked manholes. Street flowing, homeowner issue |
| 1/0/28/2020 | 27 Granite Street | Building backing up | Jetted street - Home owner issue |
| 1/0/19/2020 | 150 Whalon Street | Sewer coming up in parking lot | Sidewalk was recently dug up, checked permits. Until repaired lateral on 10/29/2020 |
| 1/0/3/2020 | 226 Clifton St | Sewer odor | When flushing bubbling out of manhole, called plumber at building |
| 9/2/3/2020 | 72 Webster Street | Sewer backing up in house. | Opened upstream and downstream manholes - All mains flowing - No evidence of odor. |
| 9/2/4/2020 | 1034 Franklin Road | Sewer in road | Checked manholes - flowing fine |
| 8/2/8/2020 | 488 Milk Street | Sewer backing up in cleanout | Checked street, no sign of sewer in street. |
| 8/2/7/2020 | 23 Congress Street | Home owner backup - Plumber on site | Checked manholes in street. Street flowing fine. |
| 8/1/9/2020 | 75 Sawyer Passway | Pump station clogged | Home owner's lateral needs repairs. |
| 8/1/4/2020 | 25 Winthrop St | Sewer backup. Home owner's lateral was snaked twice this month. | Checked upstream and downstream manholes. Main lines flowing fine. |
| 8/1/0/2020 | 186 Townsend St | Sewer backup | vacd out pump station due to high level alarm. Rags were bound around pumps. |
| 8/1/0/2020 | 66 Institute Street | Back up | Tony Received a call on 1/28/21 from Aegis Engineering. Asking about any history of work being done by the city in the last few years. Explained that the only work we know of is the CSS project about 9 years ago or so. |
| 6/2/4/2020 | 91 Payson St | Sewage running down driveway. | Checked manholes, flowing fine. |
| 6/2/9/2020 | 64 Autumn Dr | Sewer backup | Checked manholes, running fine |
| 6/2/9/2020 | 35 Richardson Road | Manhole cover off. | Put manhole cover back on. |
| 6/2/0/2020 | 4 Lawrence Street | Sewer backup | Checked manholes, all mains running fine. |
| 6/8/2020 | 32 Adams Street | Sewer backup | Main running fine, note, laterals come into manhole low. Combined area, may surcharge during rain but homeowner has a broken backflow preventer |
| 6/2/2020 | 33 Forest Street | Sewer blockage | homeowner has a broken lateral that is leaking. Told health department. |
| 5/2/1/2020 | 36 Albee Street | Sewer backup | Checked manholes, all mains running fine. |
| 3/1/6/2020 | 112 Walton Street | Line backing up | Main line flowing. Notified Plumber. Note: Until patch located in front of house. |

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

| Date | Address | Nature of Call | Findings |
|-----------|----------------------|--|---|
| 5/13/2020 | 42 Phillips Street | back up in basement | Ray responded. Looks like Unitil had a newer pole where lateral might be. Tony called Unitil, pole is over 5 years old. Tony also recalled responding to the same house in a previous year, they had a collapsed pipe near the MH, doesn't appear to have ever been fixed. Checked main line, seems to be flowing fine. |
| 3/19/2020 | 44 Lawton Avenue | sewer back up in house | Carl responded, he said upstream and downstream manholes were flowing, however the lateral in the MH that leads to 48 was blocked with rags on the bench from the lateral. Pushed rags down main line, and homeowner was going to add drain to line. |
| 2/11/2020 | 48 Woodworth Avenue | back up in house | Plumber couldn't get through lateral. Unblocked lateral from inside the manhole. Plumber was then able to jet and tv lateral. |
| 2/19/2020 | 216 Charles St | house back up | Ray responded, checked main lines, flowing fine, told homeowner to call a plumber |
| 2/20/2020 | 27 Clearview Ave | back up | Root ball at end of lateral. Ran saw in main to try to cut roots to see if that would help homeowner. |
| 3/5/2020 | 14 Proctor Avenue | back up at house | Ray and Eddie responded, the manholes were flowing fine. Property owner calling a plumber. |
| 3/19/2020 | 14 Putnam Street | back up | Manholes flowing fine, told homeowner to call plumber |
| 2/24/2020 | 410 North St | back up | Lines flowing in street. Jetted street. Suggested owner call plumber |
| 3/5/2020 | 42 Phillips Ave | back up | Carl responded and bob, main lines fine, it is a homeowner issue |
| 5/15/2020 | 1077 South St | pipe in basement is leaking | Ray and ed responded, sewer on easement is flowing fine. Tony also talked to homeowner, he said he's had roots before but he just wanted us to check main line first. Homeowner will call a jetting company. |
| 5/12/2020 | 64 Mt Vernon St | back up at house | Back up, all man lines flowing, told homeowner to call a plumber |
| 4/20/2020 | 133 Hurd St | back up | Bob opened manhole to see if homeowner's lateral was entering MH to assist the property owner, it was not. |
| 4/24/2020 | 4 Maverick Street | plumber requested access to MH | Main had good flow, no odor detected. |
| 3/2/2020 | 18 Matthew Street | back up into basement | Carl and Eddie responded, sewer is rippling through, it's a homeowner issue. |
| 3/26/2020 | 325 Boutelle Street | back up | Lateral blocked. Needs a plumber to tv and snake line. |
| 3/2/2020 | 17 Senna Road | clean out has sewer coming out of it in trailer park | City sewer is fine, roofer man is coming to clean private lines in trailer park |
| 2/10/2020 | 276 Lunenburg Street | clean out has sewer coming out of it in trailer park | Homeowner said she would do laundry and back up into sink. Tony and ray responded, jetted line, but main line was fine, told homeowner she might have roots, based on TV. Gave her some Root-X |
| 1/19/2021 | 66 Thondike Street | back up in basement sink | |